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tion that our country was really at war; why you could almost imagine you were "over there"; and then the return to the hospital ward to spend, perhaps, the greater part of the night by the bedside of some mother's son who was bravely fighting his last fight; or, more happily, as the hours passed, to stand by one and feel that he had passed the crisis and would soon be strong and well again. But, always, you were so glad to see the sun appear over the eastern mountains and to know that your watch was ended.

No nurse who loves her work would fail to find full enjoyment in caring for these boys in the Navy at this time. So much has been and is being said about our soldiers, and so little about the sailor, that sometimes, we who know him better, grow quite jealous for him. His chances are just as great, and his work, while not so spectacular, is quite as important.

The work of the nurse is made easier by the capable, intelligent aid rendered her by the majority of the hospital corps men. I find these boys, for the most part, patriotic, earnest, and interested in their work. They, together with the sailors of other ratings, are longing for their chance to be sent "over there."

And we nurses who entered the service hoping to be detailed within sound of the firing line, while biding our time, find it no task but a privilege to do our bit, but our best, for these boys who have so nobly given their all to their country.

THE PREPARATORY COURSE ¹

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It is not the purpose of this paper to deal with the entire course of study, but rather to discuss that period of training which makes up the so-called preparatory course. Such a course, occupying from three to six months of the pupil's first year in the school, is designed to give her a more thorough preparation for the heavy responsibilities attached to ward work and for more complete theoretical instruction later in her course. During this period the pupil is not expected to carry a heavy burden of ward work, but has practically all her time for class work, study and recreation. The length of time to be devoted to such preliminary instruction should be determined with the welfare of the pupil as the only consideration. From three to four months seems a good average, for in this time it is possible to give

¹Slightly abridged from a paper read before the Missouri State League of Nursing Education, November, 1917.

thorough instruction in the fundamental sciences and allied subjects as well as to provide opportunity for a few hours' ward work daily. The latter should be considered as laboratory periods during which the pupil is able to put into practice, under close supervision from the instructor of practice work, many procedures which she has been taught in the class room. Six months seems too long a period to devote to such instruction, since the student is very likely to lose interest in her course. It is highly important for us to keep in mind that her object in entering training is that she may learn to care for the sick, consequently she must not be kept away from her patients for too long a time if her interest is to be sustained.

The relation of the preparatory course to the remainder of the nurse's training should be that of the foundation to the rest of the building. It should be planned and executed that the work through the remainder of the three years may be more thoroughly accomplished.

The subjects to be taught during this period will vary with the time allotted to it. Those ordinarily considered are anatomy and physiology, bacteriology, chemistry, practical nursing, hygiene, history of nursing, ethics, drugs and solutions, and cookery. The first three represent basic sciences upon the proper teaching of which depends, to a great extent, the full appreciation and understanding of practical nursing procedures. By completing these subjects during the period when the pupil is free from ward work, ample time can be had to provide for adequate laboratory instruction. Principles of nursing can be taught more thoroughly because the pupils have more opportunity for practice work under direct supervision. Too much instruction in this branch should not be given before they are sent to the wards for practice work. No matter how much class room work is given, that done with patients on the wards counts for a great deal more than that done in a demonstration room. Another important consideration is that nurses kept away from the wards for too long a time are likely to have developed a mechanical attitude when assigned to regular ward duty.

The elements of hygiene, personal, domestic and public, ethics, and drugs and solutions, are probably given during the first few months of training in the majority of schools and have long since been proven a necessary part of the course; history of nursing belongs in this division, since it is logical to expect the student to know and to wish to know something of the background of the profession which she is entering. From our instruction in this branch, the pupils acquire many ethical as well as historical lessons. Cookery may be incorporated in this course of study, or left until later. The advisability of the latter should be decided upon only if sufficient time is available

and it is possible to further delay for this group, practical work in the diet kitchen.

The methods of teaching for the subjects mentioned are those used in any high grade school. For the teaching of the sciences, it is folly to continue instruction by the unscientific methods which have been in vogue in the past. In order that the subject matter be vitalized for the pupils, they must study from actual materials and work out definite problems for themselves. For example, to teach **bacteriology** without laboratory instruction is like offering husks in place of the real food. In this subject, more is to be gained by the use of the laboratory method than the vitalization of scientific facts. A distinct improvement in surgical technique is shown by nurses who have had such work. Recently one class with which we have had experience was given a lesson in the dressing room, on the preparation and care of the dressing carriage. They were able to answer every question asked from their experience gained in the laboratory. For the other subjects, a combination of lectures and recitations is ordinarily considered best.

Much is to be said in favor of the student preparing outside work for the recitation. For instance, in connection with a course in anatomy, a great deal of interest is created as well as information gained for the class by reports and papers on subjects of kindred interest to the one under discussion. Examples of topics for such papers in connection with a course in anatomy are *The Stomach of a Cow*, *The Stomach of a Bird*, *A Blue Baby*, and *Anatomical Considerations in Giving an Enema*. Assignments of this nature not only help the pupil in the acquisition of facts, but direct her to wider fields of thought. Another valuable point which can be claimed for this, is that by making reports before the class, students acquire a certain amount of poise and self-possession. This plan can also be put into practice with good results in the teaching of hygiene and ethics.

The relation of theory to practice should generally be as one is to two. The number of hours of daily work on the ward can only be regulated by the actual number of hours of class work required of the pupil. It is ordinarily estimated that one hour's work in recitation requires between one-and-one-half and two hours' preparation on the part of the pupil. Fifteen hours of class work a week is what the average student can accomplish with credit. With the schedule in mind, a student would average from forty to fifty hours per week in preparation for and in the class; with two hours of practice on the ward and five on Sunday, she would average seventeen hours of ward work, thus making a total of 57 to 62 hours a week. As the minimum

is just one hour more than eight hours a day it leaves four hours daily for recreation.

The advantages of such a course are many, and they should be discussed both from the standpoint of the hospital and school and from that of the pupil. Students completing such a preparatory course and going to the wards for the regular number of hours on duty are capable of rendering much more valuable service to their patients. Through careful teaching and supervision in the class room they have acquired a certain degree of skill in carrying out the more elementary practical nursing procedures and through the practice work on the ward have become accustomed to working with patients and have had an opportunity to put the theory acquired in the class room into practice. The major part of the theoretical work required in the junior year has been completed and this prevents the possibility of overcrowding in the latter part of the year, with consequent overwork. The pupil has been given time enough to do theoretical work of a high standard.

The gain to the school and the hospital is that of increased efficiency of nursing service, and since the reputation of the hospital depends to such a great extent upon the latter, this becomes of great importance.

Another factor which should be considered is that of the elimination of students. It is an obvious necessity for the proper conduct of such a course that an instructor of practical work spend the greater part of her time with this group of pupils. This makes it possible to observe closely the students and to give more help and encouragement than is ordinarily given during this particularly trying and difficult period. It is no doubt true that many pupils leave our schools because they become discouraged. This would not so often happen if they were in close personal contact with the fine type of woman who should in greater numbers be filling the teaching positions in training schools.

OUR MONEY NOT WASTED

All of the money being expended for war purposes is not going to be a waste. Some of it is going to be shot away; some of it is going to be sunk at sea; some of it is going to be invested in machinery that will be useless in time of peace. But a very great portion of it is being spent for things that will be as valuable when peace comes as now, though not so imperatively needed then—ships for instance. And as for the immense amount spent in adapting our manufacturing plants to war purposes, it is estimated that 90 per cent of our war machinery can and will be used for other manufacturing work after the war. The invisible and intangible forces, the moral forces of the world, the soul and conscience of mankind are fighting on our side.